



MADI'S CANVAS

Painting Her Truth

By Jodie Linton-Prickett

When you look at the intricate detail of Madi's art it is impressive at any age, but when you realize she is an eighth grader and only 13 years old you almost have to take in a little gasp of air. She was born in Waco, Texas but has grown up in Aubrey. "She inherited her artistic abilities from her father," says her mother Shannon Houck.

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Art seems to innately live deep inside Madi. Since she was very young she has had a creative spark. Like most little children she loved coloring books, colored pencils and chalks. However, she moved away from coloring inside the lines to creating lines of her own on any available surface or piece of paper.

It started with little doodles. By the age of eight her parents started to notice how serious her talent was. When she was nine she had fashioned her own set of fully developed cartoon characters, with names such as Fang. It was not long before there was a complete group of the Fang Gang with a series of whimsical stories.

Art is an amazing platform, allowing individuals to articulate their feelings and

ponder their surroundings of the world in which they live. You can see the way Madi views the world through her vivid color and detail. Madi attends Aubrey ISD, where all elementary students are introduced to art through a volunteer based program called, Meet the Masters, which teaches students about artists and their history. Students then create art akin to the artist they studied. It was at this time she became fascinated with Dutch artist Piet Mondrain, born as Pieter Mondriaan. Madi found the art of this major exponent in De Stijl movement, "the neatest art." Besides her delight with his work, there is a long list of artists she admires, although her current inspiration comes from the artists Bob Ross and Thomas Kincaid.

While Madi is still finding



her voice in the world of art, her form of self-expression is engaging. She presents her encounters in a way that affects people. Madi has been in art classes since sixth grade and attended two outside camps in Denton. She has discovered new mediums and techniques offering her new ways to explore self-expression. In seventh grade, she became a member of the Jr. Beta Club and submitted an art piece to the Texas Jr. Beta Club Convention and received third place and advanced to the national level. Disappointingly, COVID curtailed the spring seventh grade competition through her school.

"Madi is such a naturally talented artist! She just knows where to put color, how to use it, and how to pull out all together. Madi instinctively knows how to represent light, which is something I find incredibly difficult to do," says her art teacher Mandy Duncan, "I've always admired the way my artist grandfather could just do that effortlessly. She reminds me so much of watching him draw and paint. Once I watched him paint a crumpled paper bag for an illustration and I remember asking how he knew exactly what shade is brown to use for each crinkle and he couldn't really answer... He





just knew. That's Madi Houck! You can see it in the detail of feathers on a bird she drew with colored pencils, in the shading of a painted owl portrait, the surface of water, or the reflection of light in a frog's eyes-- all the little seemingly subtle things that really aren't. She just gets it, and I am amazed by her!"

By the age of thirteen, over the summer of 2020, Madi has had five pieces of art commissioned by Yvonne Damon. As to be expected, she was excited to have her first paying job. "Every year that Madi's father has worked for me she has made me a Christmas card featuring the Fang Gang. Between her art and the Fang Gang I am

not sure which impresses me more," says Damon, "I have watched her improve her talent to the point that when I needed artwork I called her Mom. I told her my budget and how many pieces. The only instructions I gave were the size and the animal I wanted done. I left the creative decisions such as background and color to her. I wanted an original. I have the honor of being her first client. I can't wait to see her continue to grow her talent. I will most certainly be treating myself to more pieces in the future. It's exciting to see a young person with such talent. It's truly amazing."



When 380Guide asked Madi what her general goals in life are, she responded with, "I'm only 13, so right now I'm focused on finishing high school, going to college and major in something with art." As far as her artistic goals, "I have not figured this out. Where God opens the doors to lead me is where I'll go."

When not creating, Madi is your typical fun loving teenager. She lives with both of her parents, her

brother, and the family dog, Charlie. Madi loves to read, spending time with her family and friends, exploring new things, going to the movies, trips to the art store, traveling and visiting different museums. She also delighted when helping others around her.

Henry Ward Beecher once said, "Every artist dips her brush into her own soul, and paints her own truth into her pictures." It appears Madi does just this. ☺

